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# INFO SHEET

## Veterinary Services

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

January, 1996

## 1994 Sheep Death Loss Due to Predators & Health-Related Causes

### National Death Loss

Seventy-three percent of the 1994 United States sheep death loss was lambs (Figure 1).

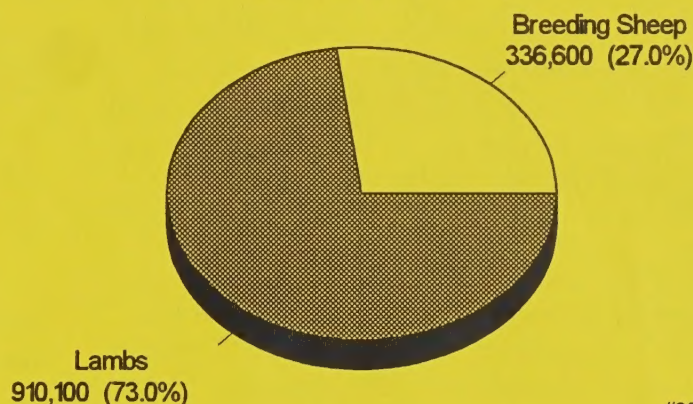
A total of 910,100 lambs and 336,600 breeding sheep died in 1994, totals representing 9.5 percent of the U.S. lamb inventory and 5.5 percent of the breeding sheep inventory. **Overall, death losses cost the U.S. sheep industry 8.0 percent of their inventory.**

This information was part of a report entitled 'Sheep and Lamb Death Loss 1994' (NASS LDP Number 95-01). The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the USDA:Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' National Animal Health Monitoring System and Animal Damage Control cooperated on a study of 1994 U.S. breeding sheep and lamb death loss. About 75,000 sheep producers were selected by random sample and participated in the study through mailed questionnaires and telephone or personal interviews.

Producers attributed most of the breeding sheep and lamb deaths to predators and health-related problems, such as diseases, weather, poison, and lambing difficulties. Figure 2 shows that health-related problems caused more deaths of breeding sheep (53.3 percent) than predators (31.7 percent). The percentage for lamb deaths due to predators was 0.8 percent higher than that for health-related problems.

Figure 1

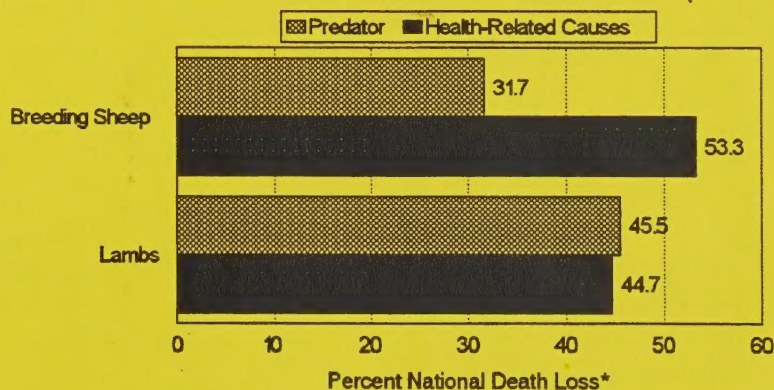
1994 U.S. Sheep Death Loss  
Total = 1,246,700



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Figure 2

### 1994 Sheep Death Losses Due to Predators & Health-Related Causes\*

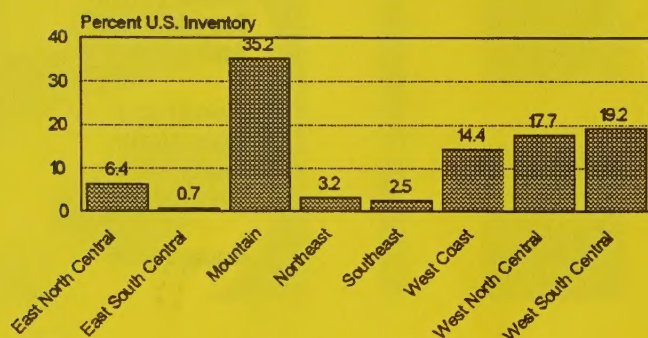


\* Breeding sheep: 1/1/94 inventory of ewes & rams. Lambs: 1/1/94 lambs on feed & 1/1/94 replacement lambs (calculated by subtracting ewes and rams from the total inventory on 1/1/94) + 1994 lamb crop. Inventory per Sheep & Goats, USDA:NASS. Lv Gn 1 (1-95).

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Figure 3

1994 Regional Sheep Inventory  
as Percent of U.S. Inventory\*

## Regional Death Loss

Regional determinations were based on similarities in climate and flock management.<sup>1</sup>

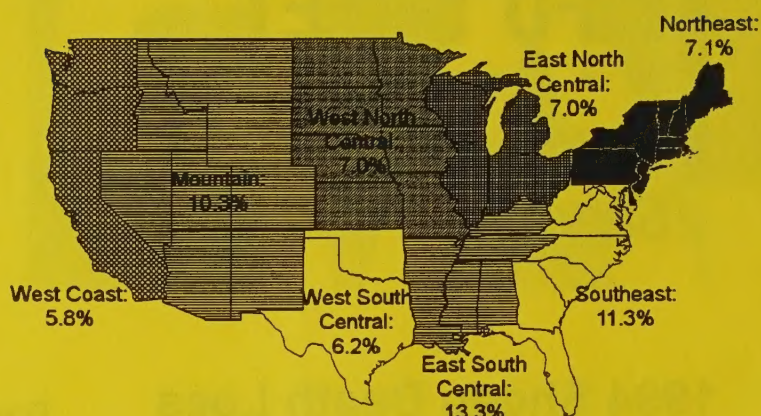
Figures 3 and 4 show that regions with the largest populations reported some of the lowest regional death rates. Death losses for all ages of sheep ranged from a low of 5.8 percent in the West Coast region to a high of 13.3 percent in the East South Central (Figure 4).

Regionally, death losses due to predators ranged from 0.8 percent in the West North Central to 3.7 percent in the East South Central (Figure 5). Figure 6 shows the Mountain and West South Central regions had higher death rates due to predators than health-related events.

With few exceptions, lamb death losses as a percent of regional inventories were higher than those for breeding sheep. This fact was generally true for both the predator and health-related causes categories. Lamb death losses for both causes varied more widely across regions than those for breeding sheep.

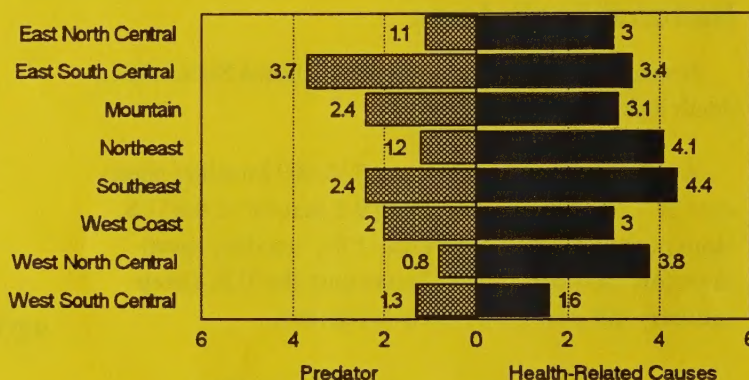
For additional information on national and regional sheep death loss and health-related causes, contact: Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health; USDA:APHIS:VS, Attn. NAHMS; 555 South Howes; Fort Collins, CO 80521; (970) 490-7800; Internet: NAHMS\_INFO@aphis.usda.gov N193.196

Figure 4

Regional 1994 Sheep Losses as  
Percent of Regional Inventory\*

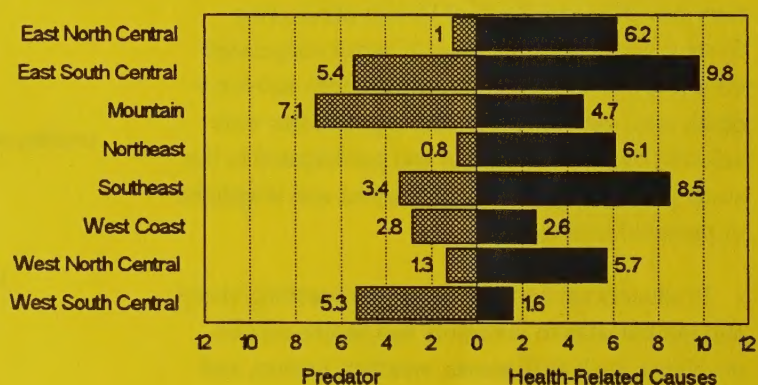
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Figure 5

1994 Regional Breeding Sheep Death Losses due to Predators  
& Health-Related Causes as Percent of Regional Inventory\*

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Figure 6

1994 Regional Lamb Death Loss Due to Predators &  
Health-Related Causes as Percent of Regional Inventory\*

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Parker, C.F.; The sheep industry: trends, economics, and production aspects. Veterinary Clinics of North America: Food Animal Practice. 1986. 2:329-333.

\*Breeding sheep: 1/1/94 inventory of ewes & rams. Lambs: 1/1/94 lambs on feed & 1/1/94 replacement lambs (calculated by subtracting ewes & rams from the total inventory on 1/1/94) plus 1994 lamb crop. AR, DE, FL, GA, HI, MS, RI, and SC were not included in regional estimates due to missing inventory totals. Inventory per Sheep & Goats, USDA:NAASS. Lv Gn 1 (1-95).